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No.4
APRIL

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DARE-
DEVIL!

SPIDER-
MAN!

FEATURES!
REVIEWS!
NEWS!

COLOUR
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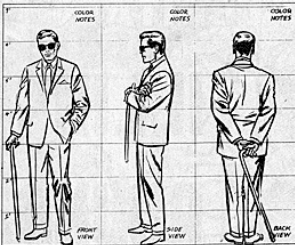


THE DAREDEVILS

Welcome to issue 4 of **The Daredevils**! Read, enjoy and send your comments to: **The Daredevils**, Marvel Comics, 205-211 Kentish Town Road, Kentish Town, London NW5.

DAREDEVIL

NAME OF MAG. DD	NAME OF CHARACTER: MATT MUDDOCK
AGE	HEIGHT
SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS	WEIGHT
	HAIR COLOR



Artist Wally Wood's original character sketch for Daredevil, circa 1964.

COMIC STRIP

CAPTAIN BRITAIN

KILLING GROUND p.4
The confrontation between Captain Britain and Slaymaster!

DAREDEVIL

BLIND ALLEY p.14
Whilst Daredevil attempts to help the psychotic Hulk escape from New York, journalist Ben Urch gets an exclusive ... on Daredevil!

SPIDER-MAN

ENTER DOCTOR OCTOPUS cont p.42
Doc Ock has the nullifier, can Spidey get it back?

INSIDE COMICS

LETTERS PAGE p.12
Your thoughts and opinions on the first issue of **The Daredevils**, plus some news and views from the Bullpen.

SEXISM IN COMICS: Part 1 p.18
Titled 'Invisible girls and phantom ladies' Alan Moore takes a look at how women are portrayed in comics.

ARTISTS EARLY WORK p.31
This month we look at the work of one time medical illustrator John Higgins.

REVIEW p.35
A rundown on Comics Unlimited No.52

STAN LEE: BLINDED BY THE HYPE Part 2 p.46
With Stan caught in the editorial decisions of a now large enterprise, Alan Moore comments on the writers which followed and the consequent state of the comics industry.

READERS SURVEY p.52
An attempt by us to find out all about you — within reason!

"IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME, CAPTAIN. I THOUGHT THAT YOU WERE DEAD."

"ME TOO, SLAYMASTER. I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD, TOO."

"HERE WE ARE AGAIN, THEN, CAPTAIN. ARE YOU READY?"

"I'M READY."

"VERY WELL."

"LET'S SEE IF WE CAN GET IT RIGHT THIS TIME."



**CAPTAIN
BRITAIN**

**KILLING
GROUND**

CO-CREATORS - ALAN MOORE & ALAN DAVIS
LETTERER - JOHN ALDRICH
EDITOR - BERNIE JAYE



THE POLICE!
WAS ANYBODY
SENT FOR THE POLICE?

BEAT HIM,
BRIAN. PLEASE
BEAT HIM.

GOD FORGIVE
ME. I HOPE YOU
KILL HIM...



...THE WAY
HE KILLED
MY FRIENDS.

ELIZABETH? WHAT
THE HELL'S GOING
ON? AVRIL AND
VICKY ARE...



I KNOW. I FELT IT
IN MY MIND WHEN
HE KILLED THEM.
DAMN HIM, TOM.
DAMN HIS EYES.

HIM. AND THE MONSTER
WHO TURNED HIM LOOSE
ON US. THE VIXEN. LOOK
AT THE WEAPONS HE'S
USING. TOM, S.T.R.I.K.E.
WEAPONS. HE'S GOT
S.T.R.I.K.E. GOTT
HIM UP.

OF COURSE. THE VIXEN
MUST CONTROL S.T.R.I.K.E.
COMPLETELY BY NOW. AND
NOBODY KNOWS BUT US
PSI DIVISION PEOPLE. THAT'S
WHY HE WANTS US DEAD.

HOW DO WE FIGHT
HIM, ELIZABETH?
S.T.R.I.K.E. HAS
THE SAME POWER
AND RESOURCES
AS S.H.A.R.E.I.D. IT'S
AMERICAN COUNTER-
PART. HOW DO WE
FIGHT SOMETHING
LIKE THAT?



I DON'T KNOW,
TOM. THAT'S WHY
I GOT IN TROUBLE
WITH MY BROTHER.

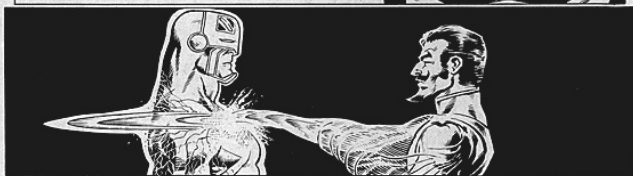
YOUR
BROTHER?
THAT'S
YOUR
BROTHER?



MY
GOD!













Letters

DAREDEVILS, MARVEL
COMICS, 205-211,
KENTISH TOWN
ROAD,
NWS.

Dear Merry Marvel Madmen and Ladies,

Long will I remember that sleepless night before the fantastic Daredevils No. 1 hit the stands.

Ever since our very own Captain Britain left those precious pages of Marvel Superheroes I have been trying to think how he would make his come back to our earth.

And, what's this? At last, Frank Miller's Daredevil and the continuing adventures of Spider-Man from the pocket-book. GREAT!

The sleepless night came to end, I dived out of bed and got down to the shop as fast as the Speed Demon, picked up a copy, paid and ran out. Boy... it's better than I could imagine!

CB was great and, so far, being beautifully handled. Alan Davis' art is brilliant. You're actually able to feel the joy within Cap as he is placed on the correct world, but we are told something bad is about to happen to him in the way of villains... Great! Again... Daredevil is just fantastic! Nuff said.

Like a sleepless night's dream come true, the sensational old adventures of Spidey appear... Magnificent, boy, I'm running out of adjectives.

The features were great and the colour poster of DD was excellent.

I now cannot wait for No. 2 next year.

After the first fantastic ten years of Marvel we have The Daredevils.

Thanks guys, yours,
Nicholas Taylor (age 13)
53, St. Davids Rd. Nth.,
St. Annes-on-Sea,
Lancs.
FYB 2BS.



Dear Bernie,

Just thought I'd drop a line saying how much I enjoy The Daredevils monthly. I don't buy the other Marvel UK reprint monthlies (their distribution is so bad anyway) but with The Daredevils you've really hit the right combination of new and old material. In many ways the magazine remind me of the liveliness of the old Fantastic weekly of the sixties.

The yanks have a long way to go before they can honestly say they produce 'adult comics' because that's what Captain Britain is — an adult comic strip. And you know what? It's FUN too!

The other characters in The Daredevils are a perfect choice (because all three are loners and have never got involved in a team) with Frankie Millers Daredevil (what can I say that hasn't been said before) and Stan Lee/John Romita's Spidey, (perhaps my favourite American comic combination of all-time) again I must stress a perfect choice.

Finally, after months of teasing little 2 or 3 page articles you've got it right, six pages of

Inside Comics, Fanzine reviews, Bullpen Bulletins, News feature, Early Garry Leach artwork — great! The more articles on comics the better, I say.

I suggest the next home-bred superhero be either black, female or based in Middlesbrough. (Seriously).

Gavin Ross,
2 Gainford Avenue
Linthorpe
Middlesbrough
Cleveland
TS5 7RF



Dear Ms Jaye,

I have just picked up your first edition of The Daredevils and can honestly say I am pleased.

I am pleased because I feel that it is one step nearer to that ideal, a Marvel comic that caters for the British reader. It does this in two ways. The first is Captain Britain.

This strip combines intelligence and excitement in a way that is only matched by Daredevil n America and Warrior's V for Vendetta.

The second pleasing aspect of the issue was the article and fanzine review, both by Alan Moore (undoubtedly the finest writer in British comics.) Informative and well written they helped to give foundation to a growing feeling in Britain that comics are not facile, childish

rage, but works of art that can be appreciated and enjoyed.

But apart from any intellectual satisfaction I derived from the issue, I also gained immense enjoyment. The depth of Captain Britain and Daredevil had an effective balance in the pure entertainment of Spider-Man.

Maybe in time the contents of your magazine will change. Maybe Daredevils will become an all British marvel. Maybe whatever, I just hope it survives long enough to fulfill its obvious potential. It certainly deserves to.

Yours etc.,
Nigel Roberts
28, Ainsley Close
Auckley
Doncaster
DNG 3PG



Dear Bernie,

It's not often that I say a number 1 is great, but The Daredevils was. From start to finish it was sheer Marvel excellence.

Alan Davis' artwork was even better than in Marvel Superheroes and putting Captain Britain's whole life into one story was ingenious.

I really enjoyed the feature on Frank Miller, who incidentally is one of my favourite American



Earth 33 1/3rd Artist: Dicky Howett Writer: Tim Quinn

artists. Frank Miller's art puts new life into an old character.

The feature on Garry Leach's earlier artwork was good as was the *Fanzine-Reviews* by Alan Moore.

Although I enjoyed the Spider-Man story I have never been too keen on the older stories.

The *New Feature* was interesting, but one thing that startled me was that 191 was to be the last issue of *Daredevil*. Please you lot at Marvel, think twice about this or if you have, think again, please.

Well, as they say in the cartoons "That's all Folks".

R. Pengelly,
36 Nixon Terr.,
Morrison,
Swansea,
W. Glam.



Dear Marvel UK,

Well, what a surprise! Eight, yes eight whole pages of Captain Britain, seventeen pages of *Daredevil*, twelve pages of superb articles and wow! It really makes me wanna boogie! What am I gassing about? Your new *Daredevils* magazine of course.

When I heard the news about Alan Davis working on *Marvelman*, *Harry Twenty* and *Captain Britain*, I wasn't sure whether he'd maintain his usual high standard on all three strips. But, there was no reason for doubt as any man, woman or child, comic buff or not, would tell you by simply taking a look at *Daredevils* number one.

Those ink-wash panels create a great effect and really make the most of the usual dour black and white pages.

Oh, and let us not forget about

Alan Moore, the no 1 comics writer in the United Kingdom. What a swift little line up he's got tucked under his belt now. *V for Vendetta* and *Marvelous*, both of which are going very strongly in Quality's *Warrior* and *Captain Britain* for Marvel. (Is there any chance of a *Marvelman/Captain Britain* team-up Alan?) The hairy one's got such a wonderful way with words and a great sense of storytelling that I wouldn't be surprised if we see some British *X-Men* stories soon (hint, hint).

When you compare a regular American superhero comic such as *Spiderman*, *Flash* or *Iron Man* to *Captain Britain* and *Marvelman*, it makes you wonder just who writes that American rubbish.

Glad to see that *Captain Britain* is finally interesting, thanks to the talents of the two Alans. It looks like the Captain will be living up to his potential at last, instead of being a run-of-the-mill superhero as he was in his early strips.

The other new material in the magazine — convention reports, news, fanzine reviews, etc — is very welcome.

It's like having a mini-fanzine combined with the comic, and serves the useful purpose of informing the majority of readers who haven't discovered fanzines. Not only that of course, but it helps break up the stories so that the strips don't become too relentless.

The choice of reprints is a good one. *Daredevil* under Frank Miller was its' highest peak in years. Although I've the original monthlies it's nice to see the strips in their black and white form. The *Spider-Man* reprints I'm not too happy with,

but I appreciate their enclosure for selling power. Perhaps future issues could feature more obscure stuff, like Bill Everett's *Sub-Mariner* strips for instance.

All in all *The Daredevils* is one of the best things to come out of Marvel UK in years. Not since the early issues of *Mighty World of Marvel* have I actually looked forward to seeing future editions of a British Marvel comic!

Best regards
Lew Stringer
11 Middlemarch Rd,
Hill Top,
Nuneaton,
Warwickshire
CV10 7BS.

YES, BUT WHAT
DOES
EARTH 33³
MEAN!?



● ABOUT THIS ISSUE:

COMIC MART

The *Comic Mart* doesn't appear because we gave page priority to the survey this issue. You can expect to see it back next month.

THE SURVEY

The survey obviously doesn't classify as an official document from which we can draw conclusions backed by significant statistical data. This isn't what we wanted.

A brief whiff of the communal comics spirit as it presently stands is enough for us to go on for now.

Reasonability aside, I'd lie in the middle of the road and get run over once, twice... alright three times, if you'd just send me an above average number of the things back — the more entries we receive, the clearer idea we'll have of how to develop the mag. It can't hurt (not in comparison to being run over anyway).

BIOGRAPHY

Paul Neary's early artwork appeared in *Daredevils* No. 3. Below is his biography.

Paul was born 18.12.1949. He studied metallurgy at Leeds University during which time he also started drawing for *Warren Comics* regularly (1972).

In 1977 he did his first British strip, *The Kung Fu and Sweeney* *Annals* for *Brown and Watson Publishing* plus work for *Der Skinn* on *House of Hammer*.

This was followed by work with Sydney Jordan on the *Jeff Hawke* and *Lance McLane* newspaper strips, and illustrations for publications such as *Bunte* (German equivalent of *Life* magazine), *Sunday Times* and *Observer* colour supplements, *Now* magazine and *Drive*.

Paul had a spell at *Marvel* as *Art Director* then *Editor-in-Chief*, followed by a plunge back into artwork for 2000 *AD*, *Warrior* and *Grandreams* *Annuals*. A move to *Bristol* to start an ad agency for four months, then more work for *Marvel* and *Grandreams*.

Current Work: The *Daredevils* cover artwork; inking on *Dr Who* strip and the *James Bond* comic adaptation of *Octopussy* for *Grandreams*.

● NEXT ISSUE

• THE SPIDER-MAN DEBATE: DO YOU WANT HIM IN OR OUT OF THE MAG!

• YOUR LAST CHANCE TO SEND ENTRIES TO THE TOP-TEN RATING CHARTS (SEE ISSUE 3).

• WINNER OF THE 'DAREDEVIL COVER COMPETITION' TO BE ANNOUNCED!

• PLUS LOTS MORE FEATURES, NEWS AND VIEWS!

SEE YA!



DAREDEVIL®

THE OCCASION IS A HUNDRED DOLLAR A PLATE FUNDRAISER, LAUNCHING THE RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN OF DISTRICT ATTORNEY BLAKE TOWER.





ONCE AGAIN, BLIND ATTORNEY MATT MURDOCK HAS BEEN FORCED TO PUT HIS PERSONAL PROBLEMS ASIDE -- TO RACE WITH THE SPEED AND AGILITY OF A **DAVE-DEVIL**...



...DOWN DARK, LITTER-STREWN BACKSTREETS, AS HIS UNIQUE RADAR-SENSE GUIDES HIM UNERRINGLY ALONG A TRAIL OF WANTON DESTRUCTION.



...UNTIL, AT LAST...





INVISIBLE GIRLS and PHANTOM LADIES

FEATURE by ALAN MOORE

O kay. Seeing as this is such a sticky subject I suppose I'd better lay my cards on the table straight away.

I'm a wimpy, indecisive, burned-out woolley-minded liberal old hippy who eats quiche, saves whales, is friendly to the Earth and subscribes to Spare Rib, The Black One-Parent Gay Catholic Gazette, and Animal Welfare Against Nuking the Nazis Quarterly and if anybody wants to make anything of it, then I'll quite cheerfully butt them in the face until their nose is flat enough to rollerskate on.

The reason I'm prepared to make such a candid confession is because I'm pretty sure that after reading the article in hand most of you will be saying pretty much the same things about me anyway and I thought it'd look better if I got in first. And the reason I'm donning my Sou-Wester in preparation for a torrent of abuse is because this feature concerns women, and women don't seem to be a very popular topic nowadays. There are a couple of possible reasons for this sad state of affairs.

The first is that a small but vocal percentage of feminists are quite obviously as mad as snakes and have hopelessly damaged personalities. They pounce with demented glee upon increasingly trivial and unimportant examples of 'sexism', they make outrageously twisted and generalised statements to the Press along the lines of "All men are rapists", and in general make themselves very difficult to like.

The problem arises when these foaming maniacs are presented in the media as being a representative cross section of the women's movement, thus reinforcing the image of feminism that most men are only too eager to accept as the truth: an army of crop-haired amazon gorgoyles who chainsmoke untipped woodbines, shift cement blocks for a living and have a physique somewhere between that of Popeye and a Commer van.

The other reason is that men, over the last few thousand years, have come to enjoy the perks and privileges that are part and parcel of being born into the male gender and are very reluctant to give them

YOU DIDN'T ARCH
YOUR BACK WHEN
I RUBBED IT!
YOU'RE NOT
PURRRING AS I
SCRATCH YOUR
WHISKERS! YOU
CAN'T FEEL MY
FINGERS!

BUT SURELY YOU
CAN SMELL ME,
STREAKY! YOU HAVE
SUPER-SCENT!



Supergirl would spend much time frolicking with Supercat, 1945.

up. Men in general are a pretty insecure bunch and when they start to feel threatened by something they tend to respond by hurling forth salvos of scorn and contempt, or, failing that, they refuse to take the issue seriously at all.

Even generally broadminded people who believe that the abolition of slavery in America was by and large a good thing seem to get very defensive and hysterical when it's their Sunday Lunch that's being threatened by the Women's Movement. My guess is that if these gentlemen had been Southern Plantation owners they'd have felt the same reluctance in forgoing the pleasures of their negro houseboy bringing them a Mint Julep on the veranda.

Allright. So that's the basic situation, and it's one that is obscured by a lot of bluster, silliness and ratbrainery on both sides. But once you've swept away all the damned lies and statistics, it becomes plain that there really is a serious problem under there somewhere.

Women in general are not really getting a fair suck of the sauce-stick, and it's not just in obvious areas like equal pay for equal work and who brings up baby.

These areas are obviously important, but they're all symptoms that spring from a central illness, an illness that affects the way in which we see women and the way we treat them in our largely male-oriented society.

The media presents us with a number of different stereotypes to choose from when forming our ideas of womanhood. There's a wide variety of different designs, and they're all about as palatable as a lobster with skin cancer.

There's the sort of top-heavy pneumatic giggling brain-wipe that Barbara Windsor has made a career out of portraying. There are the masochistic, grovelling sluts that populate the lyrics of heavy metal numbers and afterwards commercials. There are the acid-tongued drudges and tarts-with-a-heart-of-gold served up every

SEXISM IN COMICS



Batgirl, always conscious of her appearance, 1968.



Lois Lane indulging in a vicious catfight with her rival Lana Lang.

week in Coronation Street. There are the helpless, quivering victims that populate films like *He Knows You're Alone* and *Dressed To Kill* creatures that have no other reason for existing other than to be thrown face-first into buzzsaws by transvestite dwarf psychopaths.

I mean, imagine opening the Sun every day and finding page three adorned with a photo of a pouting specimen of masculinity clad only in his Y-fronts. Imagine naked men sprawling sensuously on the bonnets of new model cars at the motor show. Imagine having to listen to some sweaty and repugnant female version of Bernard Manning telling an endless string of Father-in-Law jokes. Sure, it's funny once. Maybe it would be funny twice. But three times? Four times? Five thousand times? Can you imagine having to live with something as insulting as that every day of your life? No wonder so many feminists are cranky.

And comics are, in their way, every bit as guilty as other media in

presenting a distorted vision of women to their readers. Maybe more guilty in some respects. After all, comics tend to be aimed predominantly at a young audience, an audience that may very well be going through an impressionable stage of their lives and desperately trying to make sense of the world in which they find themselves.

Very often, since younger school-kids tend to associate only with people of their own gender they may be well into their teens before they actually get to know and talk to any real women. And by that time the damage has been done.

When I was about seven and first started reading the *Superman/DC* family of comics, I had no reason to believe that they didn't reflect true life. Okay, so I just about had it figured out that people who tried leaping over tall buildings in single bounds were likely to do a little more than rupture themselves. I mean, I wasn't a complete idiot. But super-heroics aside, I imagined

that the way human beings behaved in these strips was probably pretty accurate. And this led me to form a number of interesting, albeit thoroughly deluded conclusions.

Firstly, only men could be heroes. *Superman, Batman, Green Arrow* . . . these were characters that one could admire. The women characters, when they emerged, were very pale and limp carbon copies of their male counterparts . . . *Supergirl, Batgirl*, the ludicrous and obscure *Miss Arrowette* . . . none of them were in any danger of upstaging the masculine Super-types whose books they infrequently appeared in. You get the impression that as much as anything they were there purely for comic relief.

Miss Arrowette would reduce gangs of criminals to spluttering, coughing helplessness by engulfing them in clouds of talc from her 'Powder-Puff Arrow'. *Batgirl* would dazzle villains by reflecting the sun's rays from the mirror con-

SEXISM IN COMICS

tained in her Bat-Compact. *Super-girl*, a being of strength approximate to that of *Superman* himself and thus able to push planets out of orbit without working up a sweat, would spend her time either frolicking with *Supercat* or *Superhorse*, or maybe falling in love with the young men from the bottle city of Kandor who would always turn out to be villains who wanted to use her in order to revenge themselves of *Superman*.

Somehow she never realised this until it was too late no matter how many times it happened. Not even when all of her Kandorian boyfriends had names like *E-Vill* and *Nars-Tee* and the like.

Secondly, women who weren't endowed with special powers of abilities were uniformly spiteful, nosey, treacherous, vain and dippy... and that was just the nice ones.

Take *Lois Lane* as a case in point. Here we have a woman who has an unusually responsible job for a member of her sex. She is a newspaper reporter, and had been so since the days when women newspaper reporters were very few and far between. Not only that, she is a star reporter whose byline is known and respected throughout Metropolis, if not the free world in its entirety.

Now, if you think about a character like that realistically, you'd imagine that for a woman to have come so far she'd have to be capable, determined, tough and extremely resilient, wouldn't you? As opposed to being doozy, vain, gossipy, lovesick and accident prone? Sure you would. But the people at DC at the time obviously felt otherwise.

Lois Lane was portrayed as a sort of shallow, brainless Superhero-Grouple who would go to any humiliating lengths to gain *Superman's* attentions. She was unlucky to the point of being near-suicidal, always managing to fall off window ledges or out of aeroplanes or getting captured by *Luthor*.

She would pry constantly into the Secret of *Superman's* true identity, more than once in the hope of blackmailing the man of steel by threatening to reveal his identity if he didn't agree to marry her. She would indulge in vicious and degrading catfights with her equally unlikeable rival, *Lana Lang*, over which of them had ownership of the kute and kuddly Kryptonian.

She was, in short, a royal pain in

the bum, and I used to cheer along with all the other little misogynists when at the end of each story *Superman* would outwit her by means of his superpowers and basic male superiority, usually managing to publicly humiliate her in the process.

As you see, the general impressions that I formed of women as a species were far from salutary. The only exception to this general rule was that of *Wonder Woman*, although I didn't really have a lot of time for her either to be honest.

Wonder Woman was at least unique in that she was a character in her own right and not just someone wearing a male superhero's old costume that had been let out a little at the chest. That said, however, you'll notice that *Wonder Woman* didn't merit the spin-offs afforded to her masculine counterparts.

There was no 'Wonder Boy' turning up complete with tiara, bracelets and lasso to aid her in her fight against crime. There was no pesky male reporter throwing himself off the Empire State Building in the hope that she'd swoop down in her invisible robot plane and rescue him.

Furthermore, even though she was allowed to join the *Justice League of America* her principal function was to sit quietly in the background at their meetings and take down the minutes as if she'd just arrived from the Temp Bureau. Clearly, she was a second-class super citizen from the word go. Perhaps that's why she used to spend so much time hanging



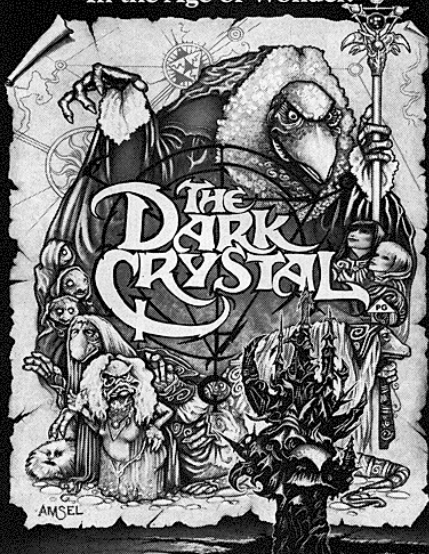
After successfully duping *Superman* into divulging his secret identity *Lois Lane* is filled with remorse, 1959.

around with her chums, the *Holiday Girls*, and getting tied up by arch-foe *Paula Von Gunter*. Who could blame her in the circumstances.

Anyway, so far I've done little more than present a brief outline of the problem and I'm already well over my word-limit for this piece. Next issue I want to look at the issue a bit more specifically and look at women in comics from *Keyhole Kate* to *Elektra*. I also want to study the curious trend in pre-adolescent pornography known in the trade as 'Good Girl Art' and ask the question "Is Dark Phoenix really just Minnie the Minx without her catapult?" Till then, keep those cards and letters pouring in.



Another World, Another Time...
In the Age of Wonder.



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"THE DARK CRYSTAL"

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Screenplay by DAVID ODELL Story by JIM HENSON Music by TREVOR JONES

Conceptual Designer BRIAN FROUD Executive Producer DAVID LAZER

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THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND. THEY THINK YOU ARE A MONSTER.







A FEW MINUTES LATER...

...AND THE PAIN, THAT'S THE WORST PART, MATT. IT HURTS SO MUCH I... THE HULK... JUST WANTS TO LASH OUT AT ANYONE OR ANYTHING THAT GETS IN MY WAY.

MORE COFFEE?

PLEASE. I MISS THINGS LIKE... WELL, LIKE A CUP OF COFFEE IN THE MORNING I MISS LIVING A NORMAL LIFE.

MAYBE, WITH HELP, YOU COULD, THE AUTHORITIES...



NO!

HIS HEARTBEAT'S SPEEDING UP... HE'S GETTING UPSET... AND THAT TRIGGERS THE CHANGE IN HIM! I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING TO CALM HIM DOWN... AND FAST!

THE AUTHORITIES WON'T DEAL WITH ME, AND THEY CAN'T DEAL WITH WHAT I BECOME--



--WHEN... I... LOSE... CONTROL...

BUT YOU WON'T LOSE CONTROL, BRUCE. ANY MORE THAN I'D TURN YOU IN AGAINST YOUR WISHES.

THINK ABOUT IT, BRUCE. I'M YOUR FRIEND...



Y-YES... MY FRIEND...

...AND ALL I WANT TO DO IS HELP YOU. IF YOU NEED MONEY, CLOTHES--

Y-YOU'VE DONE MORE THAN ENOUGH ALREADY, MATT. I COULDN'T ASK YOU TO--



BRUCE, PLEASE, FOR BOTH OUR SAKES, DON'T ARGUE WITH ME!

AND SO...



SO LONG, MATT. AND THANKS FOR EVERYTHING.



GOODBYE, BRUCE. GOOD LUCK...

IT HELPED ME, TALKING TO
MATT. I FEEL GOOD. AND
I'LL FEEL EVEN BETTER
ONCE I'M OUT OF NEW
YORK.

IF SOMETHING SHOULD
HAPPEN TO SEND THE
HULK ON A RAMPAGE
HERE...

... BUT NOTHING WILL HAPPEN.
NOT IF I JUST TAKE IT EASY
AND DO THIS BY THE NUMBERS.
MY BEST BET IS TO TAKE THE
SUBWAY TO FORT AUTHORITY,
THEN GRAB THE FIRST
GREYHOUND WEST.

THE HULK WAS CREATED
THERE, IN THE DESERT.
A TORTURED, UNCOM-
PREHENDING, AND
AWESOMELY POWERFUL
CHILD OF THE ATOM.

I DESIGNED THE GAMMA
BOMB THAT ACCIDENTALLY
GAVE HIM LIFE WHEN I WAS
EXPOSED TO ITS RADIATION.
SOME DAY, I'LL FIND A WAY
TO REVERSE THE PROCESS...
TO GIVE HIM THE PEACE HE
SO DESPERATELY CRAVES.

I WISH I COULD HANDLE
MY HANDICAP AS WELL AS
MATT HANDLES HIS. HE
LOST HIS SIGHT, BUT
BECAUSE OF THE HULK,
I'VE LOST EVERYTHING.
THE WOMAN I LOVE,
MY CAREER...

EVEN MY
HUMANITY.

BUT IF IT'S HUMANITY BRUCE WANTS, HE FINDS
PLENTY AS THE #6 LOCAL SCREECHES TO A HALT,
AND THE RUSH HOUR CROWD ELBOWS HIM ONTO
AN ALREADY PACKED CAR.

THE TRIP DOWNTOWN
SHOULD ONLY TAKE
TWENTY MINUTES, TOPS.

BUT IT SEEMS A LIFETIME.

!KOFF!
!KOFF!
!KOFF!

marvel's winter special explosion!

8 DYNAMIC TITLES!

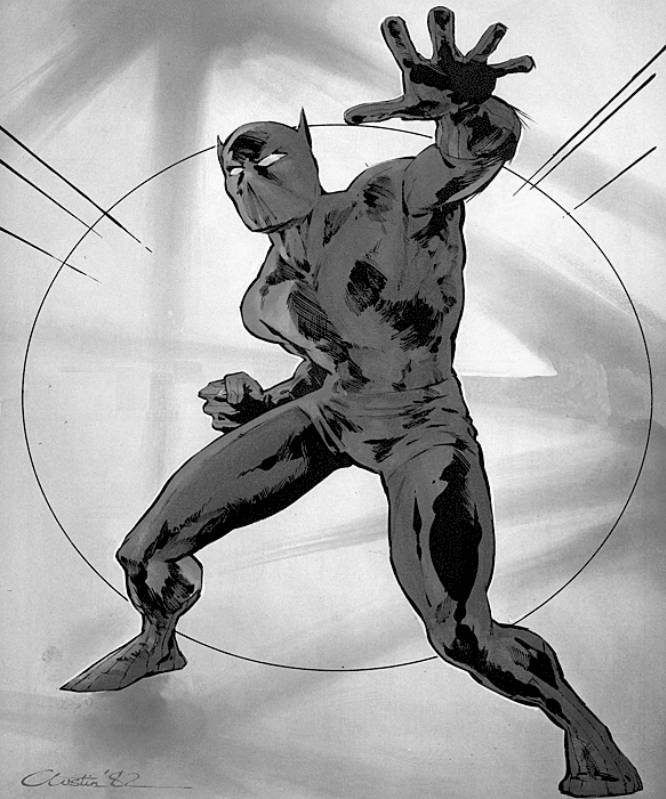
**ALL-OUT ACTION
PLUS A FREE
COLOUR POSTER!**



on sale now!



**ALSO- DAREDEVIL
DR WHO BLAKES 7**



corner

MARVEL MAGAZINE & COMICS BACK ISSUE SERVICE

ORDERING INFORMATION:

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This list supersedes and replaces any previous published by us.

Although many comics and books are stocked in depth, it would be appreciated if you would give us a list of acceptable alternatives should your first choice be sold out.

We can occasionally supply a comic of slightly lesser quality at a reduced price from our reserve books. Should you wish to avail yourself of this service, please write on your order. "Reserves Acceptable".

Should we be unable to completely fulfill an order, normal practice is to enclose a credit note in your parcel for the balance due. These credit notes can be returned at any time for more goods or refund.

To enable us to expedite your order with rapidity please indicate clearly and precisely the title, number, price and section of each item ordered.

MEMBER ALSO to include your name and address on all correspondence.

If dissatisfied with your purchase for any reason, please return it within 10 days of receipt for replacement, credit or refund.

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31-40 @ 1.00p ea., 41-50 @ 1.00p ea.,
51-60 @ 1.00p ea., 61-70 @ 1.00p ea.,
71-80 @ 1.00p ea., 81-90 @ 1.00p ea.,
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BOOKS:

2-10, 11, 21-25, 27-32, 34 @ 30p ea.

COMPLETE FANTASTIC FOUR:

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5, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 32, 34, 36-39 @ 50p ea.

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1-7-389 @ 50p ea.

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SUPERMAN: 5, 6, 10-28 @ 25p ea.

CONAN: 1-6, 8-13 @ 20p ea.

HELL: 2-13 @ 20p ea.

YOUNG ROMANCE: 1-6, 8-13 @ 20p ea.

TITANS: 4, 5, 7-13 @ 20p ea.

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EMPIRE STRIKES BACK: 140-141 @ 40p ea.

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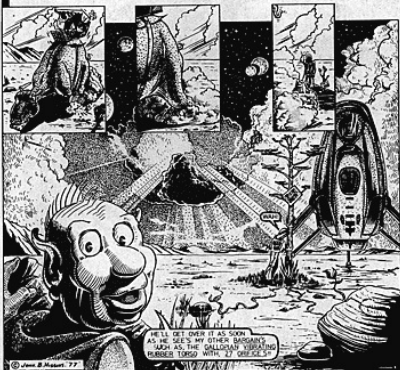


THE PERFECT MAILING COMPANY

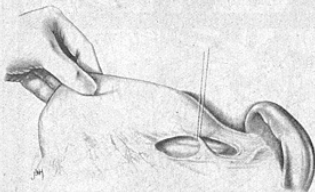
187 SPITAL ROAD, MALDON, ESSEX, ENGLAND.

JOHN HIGGINS

early artwork



A panel from John's first printed comic strip, *T.I.T. Company Ltd*, which appeared in *Brainstorm Fantasy Comic* No.1 in 1977.



A medical illustration of a stomach and spleen.

JOHN HIGGINS

Current work for Marvel: Covers for *Spider-Man* TV comic, the *Fantastic Four* and *Star Wars*, plus posters. Also, cover and comic strip for Marvel's new originated comic *Action Force* (see bulletins page for more info!)

John Higgins was born in Walton, Liverpool. He joined the armed forces and travelled the world. Left in 1970 with few regrets and lived in a Wiltshire Commune for a while.

In 1972 studied at the Wallesey College of Art, Merseyside. Left in 1974 with a certificate for technical illustration and joined the Royal Marsden hospital, London as a Medical Illustrator.

In 1978 turned freelance. Did a few comic strips and discovered that there was more to strip illustration than met the eye. Continued to become more involved in comics and started illustrating a number of *Future Shocks* for 2000 AD and cover illustrations for British Marvel late 1981.

John's work in 1982 includes covers for Marvel, Eagle, Medical and Business journals, animation, film video, and AV graphics, photo retouching, oh! . . . and comic strip.



From a book called . . . wait for it . . . *The Six-Million Dollar Cucumber*, published by Piccolo. This was one of John's first book cover illustrations.



LET HULK
OUT OF
HERE!

BUT THE ONLY ANSWER HE GETS IS THE IMPATIENT SNARL OF
CARS, BUSES AND CABS ALONG A SUDDENLY IMPASSABLE
LEXINGTON AVENUE.

C'MON! MOVE
IT UP THERE!
TRAFFIC GETS
WORSE EVERY DAY!

IT'S ENOUGH TO DRIVE
A GUY CRAZY.

OH, NO!
I CAN HEAR
PEOPLE RUNNING,
SHOUTING IN FEAR!
AND THAT
OVERPOWERING
HEARTBEAT...

ALL BRUCE WANTED WAS
A CHANCE TO GET
SAFELY OUT OF NEW
YORK, BUT OBVIOUSLY
DIDN'T MAKE IT.

AND NEITHER
DID THE HULK.

POK

POK

QUICKLY PAYING
HIS FARE, MATT
GLIDE UNSEEN AND
UNHEARD INTO THE
SHADOWS OF A
SPRAWLING
METROPOLIS THAT
WAS AWAKENED TO
A NIGHTMARE.

THE MAN-CREATURE THAT MOMENTS AGO
WAS DR. ROBERT BANNER BELLOWED
HIS DEMAND AT THE TOP OF HIS LUNGS...
AND THE END OF HIS PATIENCE.

A RAMPAGING NIGHT-
MARE CALLED --



WHAT DO YOU
WANT, HULK?



...EVACUATE THE AREA!
WE'LL NEED RIOT SQUADS,
PIRETRUCKS, AND AMBU-
LANCES!



BANNER TORTURES
HULK. LITTLE MAN!



FANZINE REVIEWS

by alan moore

COMICS UNLIMITED

Issue No. 52, Available from Fantasy Unlimited/Heroes, 21, Canonbury Lane, Islington, London N1 2SP. Six issues subscription: £2.50, single issue: 50p.

Hmmm. You don't get many fanzines these days that have reached their 52nd issue. Nor, for that matter, do you get many fanzines whose last issue appeared in October 1979.

As far as I can make out, the story behind this three year hiatus is loosely as follows: Back in the late seventies, Alan Austin's *Comics Unlimited* was one of the few fanzines that had aspired, by reason of their longevity and general quality to the position of being one of the 'big five' fan publications of that era.

Although I wasn't personally active in fandom during that period and thus never saw an issue, I've heard some very glowing reports of the 'zine's quality, intelligence and general sense of class. So is all this still true with regard to *Comics Unlimited* latest incarnation?

Well, by and large, yes. The only serious fault that I can find with the magazine is that it is, if anything, a little too short. More than a quarter of its twenty pages are taken up by advertisements and though I can see the practical economic necessity for this it still means that the 'zine represents a twenty-minute read at best.

On the other hand, what there actually is in the magazine is very interesting indeed. This is largely because of the eclectic choice of articles which seem to cover a far broader range than those in most current fanzines which are largely preoccupied with the often tedious output of the two major comic companies and precious little else.

The contributors to *Comics Unlimited* are, I would guess, a little older than the average comic fan and have a subsequently broader sense of perspective.

This comes over very clearly in articles like the one by David A. Giacardi in which we are treated to some reminiscences of what it was like collecting comic books in the 1950's.

I mean, even I don't go back that far and I found the sense of period flavour that Giacardi manages to conjure up very interesting and refreshing, sprinkling his article as he does with references to the topical music of the time (Guy Mitchell and Frankie Lane) and such vanished cultural icons as the Essoldo line of cinemas.

Perhaps more interestingly, in terms of actual comic book history, he gives an

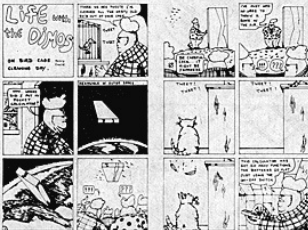
account of the British reaction to the publication during the fifties of *Frederic Wertham's* deranged and hysterical anti-comicbook tract *The Seduction of the Innocent*. (And before any of this new breed of Wertham apologists who seem to be springing up since the man himself died last year start sending me poison pen letters, may I point out that yes, I have actually read the book in question and from the evidence therein I would conclude that Dr. Wertham was at worst a frighteningly irrational book-burner and at best an utter chopholic. Just because he's dead doesn't make him right, you know.)

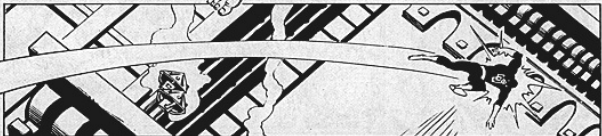
The rest of the articles that comprise *Comics Unlimited* also make for fairly interesting reading, ranging from Film and Comicbook news 'n' reviews through to a concise summary of Einstein's theory of Relativity.

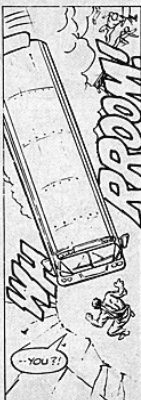
Somewhere in the middle is Mat Coward's entertaining and insightful review of *Harvey Pekar's American Splendor*, an overview by Alan Austin of the current 'Direct Sales' trend which is at the moment having such intriguing repercussions throughout the entire comic book industry and a brief review of *Warrior 5* by Dave Cutler which I have read eight times and agree wholeheartedly with every word.

Bearing in mind that this is the first issue in three years, I think any initial signs of slowness and shakiness can be safely ignored. Given another few issues I can see *Comics Unlimited* being back up there in the 'Big Five'. Or is the 'Big Two' these days? Check it out and see for yourself. Recommended.

Next issue Alan Moore reviews Ed Hillyer and Rob Sharp's *Project Gen*, which he briefly describes as "a multi-media empire making a bold and praiseworthy attempt at global domination, probably financed by the Saudis". Sounds interesting!







OH HHHH...

N- NOTHING...
I COULD... DO.
HULK'S TOO
STRONG... TOO
BRUTAL... LUCKY
... TO BE...
ALIVE...

TRIED MY BEST
... TO STOP HULK.
BEST WASN'T...
GOOD ENOUGH.

NOBODY... EXCEPT ME.
I'D ALWAYS KNOWN THAT
I'D BACKED DOWN...
THAT I RAN...

HULK IS
TIRED OF
RUNNING!

HULK WILL
STAY IN THIS
CITY UNTIL
HULK FINDS
BANNER!

YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM
HULK FOREVER, BANNER!
IF HULK HAS TO, HULK
WILL DESTROY CITY!
BUT HULK WILL FIND--

WHERE
ARE YOU
BANNER?

... YOU ?!



...BUT FOR THE PAST FEW WEEKS HE HAS BEEN CAREFULLY ASSEMBLING THE MYRIAD PIECES OF THE BIGGEST EXCLUSIVE OF HIS CAREER.

TODAY, WITH A SINGLE WORD, HIS JOURNALISTIC PUZZLE HAS BEEN COMPLETED.

LADY, IF THERE WAS ANYTHING I COULD DO, I'D BE DOING IT!

PLEASE... DO SOMETHING BEFORE THAT THING KILLS MA--!

HULK... ...IN THE NAME OF GOD... ...LISTEN TO REASON!

DESTROYING NEW YORK WON'T SOLVE ANYTHING!

YOU WON'T FIND BANNER THAT WAY!

YOU CAN'T FIND BANNER THAT WAY!

DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?

YOU ARE BANNER!

NO!

BANNER MADE THE HULK A MONSTER AND HULK WILL FIND HIM, EVEN IF IT TAKES FOREVER!

FOR MAN AND MONSTER ALIKE, EVENTS COME FULL CIRCLE...



...RETURNING IN THE
END, TO THE BLIND
ALLEY WHERE THEY
BEGAN...

HULK...*SKOFF!*...
YOU WON'T FIND
BANNER...*SKOFF!*
...THIS WAY

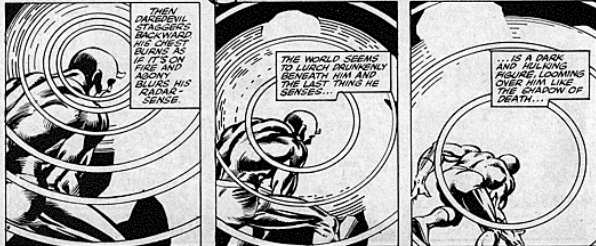
YOU CAN'T...*SKOFF!*...
FIND BANNER THIS
WAY.



...AND...*SKOFF!*...
I WANT TO HELP
YOU.

...BUT YOU'LL
HAVE TO
TRUST ME

THE
POLICE...THE
AUTHORITIES...
I-I WANT TO
HELP THEM
UNDERSTAND
...*SKOFF!*...



THEN
DAREDEVIL
STAGGERS
BACKWARD
HIS CHEST
BURNS AS
IF IT'S ON
FIRE AND
AGONY
BLURS HIS
RANDOM
SENSE.

THE WORLD SEEMS
TO LURCH DRUNKENLY
BENEATH HIM AND
THE LAST THING HE
SENSES...

...IS A DARK
AND HULKING
FIGURE, LOOMING
OVER HIM LIKE
THE SHADOW OF
DEATH...



MEDIC!

OVER HERE! HURRY! DAREDEVIL'S HAVING TROUBLE BREATHING! I THINK HIS RIBS ARE BROKEN... HE'S IN SHOCK!

HE DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE! NOT AGAINST THE HULK! BUT HE DIDN'T BACK DOWN. EITHER, HE LAID HIS LIFE ON THE LINE FOR THIS TOWN!

NO WONDER HE'S CALLED THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!

ANYBODY SEE WHERE THE HULK WENT?



"...LIKE HE'D JUST LOST HIS ONLY FRIEND..."

"YEAH, I DID! HE STALKED RIGHT PAST ME! HE'S PROBABLY MILES FROM HERE BY NOW. AND I'LL NEVER FORGET THE LOOK ON HIS FACE..."



EPILOGUE

THE HOURS DRAG SLOWLY BY AS DAREDEVIL LIES IN BELLVIEW HOSPITAL'S INTENSIVE CARE UNIT, FIGHTING FOR HIS LIFE...



...AND BEN URICH BENDS OVER HIS BATTERED TYPEWRITER, WRESTLING WITH A DEADLINE...

BEN, IT'S LATE. CAN'T THAT WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW?

NO, DARLING. IT CAN'T. YOU GO ON TO BED...



I WON'T BE LONG...

Few people remember battling Jack Murdock now. He was a second-rate boxer who lived and died in an era of second-rate boxers. All he wanted was a shot at the top. Instead, he was shot in the back. It was his murder that prompted his son, Matthew, to become Daredevil...

NEXT: THE DAREDEVIL EXPOSE!

Spidey is in mid battle with Dr Ock who has stolen a missile defense unit called a nullifier!

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!

SO! YOU SAVED YOURSELF BY CLINGING TO THE OUTSIDE WALL, DID YOU?

MAN--BUT NOT FOR LONGS!!

AND, WITH THE AID OF MY FOUR EXTRA ARMS--

--I WILL REACH YOU LONG BEFORE YOU CAN MAKE IT TO THE GROUND!

BOY! I NEVER HEARD ANYONE YAK SO MUCH!

HOW DO YOU INTEND TO BEAT ME-- BY TALKING ME TO DEATH??

NOW THAT I HAVE NO FURTHER USE FOR CONFINEMENT, I CAN DISPOSE OF MY CLOAK--!

--JUST AS I INTEND TO DISPOSE OF YOU!

ANYWAY, IN CASE I FORGOT TO TELL YOU--

I'M NOT HEADING FOR THE GROUND--!

SMILIN' STAN LEE and JOHNNY ROMITA

DR. OCTOPUS

BUT YOU ARE, SONNY!

I WAS JUST WAITING-- TILL YOU GOT WITHIN REACH!

MICKEY DEMEO EMBELLISHER, AND ARTIE SIMAK, LETTERER.

AND NOW-- AWWAAAAAY WE GO--!!

YOU STILL DON'T REALIZE THAT I HOLD ALL THE ACES??!

MEANWHILE, AMONG THE MANY SPELLBOUND SPECTATORS ON THE GROUND, WE FIND--

THERE'S NO SIGN OF PETER ANY-- WHERE!!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT!

WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO HIM?

I CAN'T HELP FEELING THAT HE'S IN SOME SORT OF DANGER!

TALK ABOUT FEMALE INTUITION! GORGEOUS GWEN JUST COULDN'T BE ~~WRONG~~!

HEADS UP, DOC!

YOU FIGURED YOU'D HAVE THE ADVANTAGE HERE ON THE ROOF-- CAUSE YOU COULD STAND ON YOUR FEET, AND USE ALL FOUR ARMS FOR FIGHTING, EHE

WELL, YOU CAN'T HEAR WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE--

--AND YOU WON'T SEE ME WHILE YOUR EYES ARE COVERED WITH WEB FLUID!

YOU'RE TRULY CLEVER, SPIDER-MAN!!

BUT NOT CLEVER ENOUGH!!

EVEN WITH MY VISION OBSCURED, MY ARMS WILL BRING ME VICTORY!!

THE MULLIGER!! YOU'RE DANGLING IT OVER THE STREET BELOW!

IF I DROP IT--GEEKS WILL BE CRUSHED!

SO YOU CAN'T EVEN FOLLOW UP YOUR SMALL VICTORY!

NOT WHILE INNOCENT PEOPLE NEED YOUR PROTECTION!

HE'S RIGHT! I CAN'T LET THAT FALL!

NOR CAN I RUN OFF-- WITHOUT PLANTING MY SPIDY TRACER!





NO CHANCE TO REACH IT--BUT--

IF I CAN SWARE IT WITH MY WEBBING IN TIME--!!

GOT IT!



WHILE, ON THE ROOFTOP ABOVE--

IT'S NO USE, I CAN'T GET THE FLUID OFF, IT'S STUCK TOO TIGHT!

BUT, I CAN'T REMAIN HERE LIKE THIS-- I'M TOO VULNERABLE WITH MY VISOR CLOUDED!



IF I USE MY TENTACLES AS FEELERS--

--I CAN STILL MAKE MY WAY TO SAFETY--

--SO LONG AS I KEEP MY SENSE OF DIRECTION!



AND, AS THE MULTI-ARMED MENACE FEELS HIS WAY INTO THE ALL-CONCEALING SHADOWS OF NIGHT--

HEADS UP, GANG!

SEE IF YOU CAN ALARM ONTO THIS GIZMO FROM NOW ON!

YOU DON'T FIND VALUABLE MULLARIES ON EVERY STREET CORNER!



WELL, THAT'S THAT! NOW, IF DOC-- MEV!

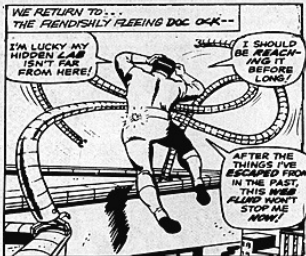
HE'S GONE! HE MANAGED TO CUT OUT-- EVEN WITH HIS EYES COVERED WITH WEB FLUID!

BUT I CAN ALWAYS TRACK HIM DOWN--SO LONG AS MY LITTLE SPIDRY TRACKER HANGS IN THERE!



RIGHT NOW, I'D BETTER CHANGE AGAIN AND CUT BACK TO GWEN AND THE PROF!

I'M GONNA HAVE ME SOME TALL EXPLORING TO DO--AS USUAL!



Continued after 3 pages

'INSIDE COMICS'

STAN LEE: BLINDED BY THE HYPE *an affectionate character assassination.* **PART 2**

by alan moore

As Marvel began to grow into a bigger and bigger concern, Lee seemed to find most of his time taken up in the day to day editorial decisions implicit in such a large enterprise, and less and less time available for the actual writing.

Other writers began to appear. Some of them, like Roy Thomas, were very very competent indeed. Others were less so. The one thing that all of these newer writers had in common was that they had by and large cut their teeth upon the writing of Stan Lee.

This was good in as much as it lent a pleasing continuity to the books. Roy Thomas following Stan Lee with a style very much like Lee's own... but bad in that what we were getting was a kind of Stan-Lee-Once-Removed situation. It was a sort of watering down process.

Eventually, writers began to appear who had cut their teeth upon Roy Thomas and the original idea was diluted still further. Writers who had less idea about plotting and characterization than a common earthworm came to believe that all one needed to write a good solid StanLee type story was to have *Dr Doom* or *Galactus* turn up and the heroes to spend a couple of obligatory frames arguing amongst themselves.

But, through Lee's genius for publicity, the Marvel Machine had gathered a certain momentum. Each successive cover boasted that *this issue* was destined to be "The Greatest Super Heroic Slugfest in the Mighty Marvel Age of Comics!" And, like the ninnies we were, we believed it. After all, when had Stan ever lied to us?

No matter that the issue in question featured the same old mindless fight scenes that we'd been through a hundred times before. No matter that the characters had degenerated into shallow parodies of their former selves. We

sent off for our MMMS membership kits and erected fiery crosses in the gardens of people suspected of reading D.C comics or Brand Ech as our fearless leader suggested we refer to his distinguished competition.

We were wild-eyed fanatics to rival the loopyest thuggee cultist or member of the Manson family. We were True Believers.

The worst thing was that everything had ground to a halt. The books had



The X-Men, drawn by Byrne and written by the Lee-influenced Chris Claremont.

stopped developing. If you take a look at a current Spider-Man comic, you'll find that he's maybe twenty years old, he worries a lot about what's right and what's wrong, and he has a lot of trouble with his girlfriends.

Do you know what Spiderman was doing fifteen years ago? Well, he was about nineteen years old, he worried a lot about what was right and what was wrong and he had a lot of trouble with his girlfriends.

On the benign side, nearly everyone working in the medium today, especially those of us who are writers, owe Stan Lee a very great debt. I'd be the first to admit that any flair which my own writing might possess probably originates back on that Thursday afternoon when I was eight years old, sitting and boggling at the strange-looking comic that was as far removed from *Blackhawk* as Mother Theresa is

from Hugh Hefner. That's a debt that I don't take lightly, and if I wore a hat it would certainly be doffed to Mr Lee for providing me with the inspiration that is currently helping to pay my rent.

Also, as I said in the opening paragraphs of this article, without the revitalising spark that Lee brought to the industry way back then, comics today would be vastly different and might not even exist at all.

A number of todays most clearly Lee-influenced writers . . . Chris Claremont, Marv Wolfman, Jim Shooter . . . would almost certainly not be with us. Whether that is a good thing or a bad thing depends upon your opinion of their individual talents. Stan Lee has done a hell of a lot for the industry and there's no getting away from it.

But it's a thing that cuts both ways. I've often noticed that the most sparkling examples of the industry at the

peak of it's form seem to have an ultimately deleterious effect upon the medium as a whole. As a for instance, the original *E C Mad* comic, undeniably brilliant in it's own right, has doomed us to a situation where any new humour magazine that appears is almost forced by law to have a title associated with mental illness (Cracked, Sick, Crazy, Frantic, Panic, Madhouse, etc.) and features a pale imitation of *Mad*'s stock in trade genre parodies without reflecting any of the wonderful drive and imagination of the original. The same is true of Stan Lee.

Stan Lee became a name that was synonymous with comic-book success. His competitors had either to copy what he was doing or go out of business. The largest of these competitors D C comics, opted for the former course of action and today have a product which is largely interchangeable with that of their Marvel counterparts.

You see, somewhere along the line, one of the newer breed of Marvel editors . . . maybe it was Marv Wolfman, maybe it was someone else, had come up with one of those incredibly snappy sounding and utterly stupid little pieces of folk-wisdom that some editors seem to like pulling out of the hat from time to time.

This particular little gem went something as follows; "Readers don't want change. Readers only want the illusion of change." Like I said, it sounds perceptive and well-reasoned on first listening. It is also, in my opinion, one of the most specious and retarded theories that it has ever been my misfortune to come across.

Who says readers don't want change? Did they do a survey or something? Why wasn't I consulted?

If readers are that averse to change then how come Marvel ever got to be so popular in the first place, back when constant change and innovation was the order of the day? Frankly, it beats the hell out of me.

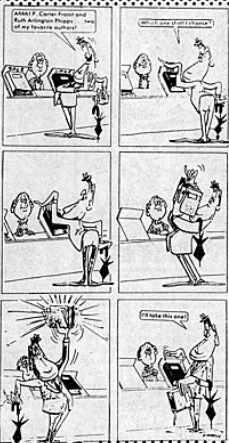
Perhaps I could have a little more sympathy for pronouncements like this if there was some solid commercial reasoning behind them. If, for example, Marvel's books had suddenly started selling significantly more during the period when this "Let's-Not-Rock-The-Boat" policy was introduced, then I might have reluctantly been forced to agree with it.

This is not the case. Marvel's best selling title today is the X Men, or it was when last I saw any figures. It sells

DON MARTIN DEPT. PART II

Being both a member of the *Illicit* and the *Illicit*, Don Martin is familiar with the soul-searching torment

ON CHOOSING A BOOK





Above: Firestorm from DC Comics Below: Captain Victory from Pacific Comics.

something like 300,000 copies, and it is regarded as a staggering success.

Listen, in a country the size of America, 300,000 copies is absolutely pathetic. Back in the early fifties it was not unknown for even a comparatively minor-league publication like *Lev Gleason's* original *Daredevil* (no relation) to clear six million copies every month. Even in the early days of the Marvel empire, any comic that was selling only 300,000 copies would have probably been cause for grave concern amongst those in charge of it's production, and indeed it would have most likely been cancelled. These days, it's the best we've got.

Now, I don't want to cause too much alarm and despondency by talking about Marvel's imminent downfall. Some of the recent developments over there in the home of the hamburger look very promising indeed and it looks as if it might just be possible to save the day at the last minute, the way it always happens in the comics. But, and it's a big but, it's been left awfully late. Maybe too late. We'll have to wait and see.

As for Stan Lee, to read the man's increasingly infrequent pronouncements you would assume that everything was brighter and better than it had ever been before. Gradually,

however, it became clear that Stan Lee was no longer even marginally associated with the line of comics that had made him a very rich man. Oh sure, you get "Stan Lee presents . . ." at the top of every splash page and the odd guest-spot of embarrassing geriatric gibberings from the man himself turning up in the *Bullpen Bulletin* pages from time to time, but I have my doubts as to whether Mr Lee has actually bothered to read a Marvel comic since sometime during the early seventies. As far as I know he occupies some sort of executive position out on the sunny west coast of America and is thoroughly immersed in a world of gold ingots and grey chest-hairs. In short, he's out of the picture.

So, finally getting round to the initial purpose of this article, what sort of legacy has he left behind him? In comic book history, is he a Hero or a Villain?

Well, to borrow a concept that Mr Lee himself made popular during the early sixties, he's a Hero/Villain, just like the *Submariner* or *Hawkeye*. He has had an influence upon the medium which is as benign as it is poisonous.

In the *Justice League*, *Green Arrow* and *Hawkmant* argue together in a pale echo of those original *Thing/Torch* dust-ups of yesteryear. *Firestorm* is about twenty years old, has lots of teenage problems and trouble with his girlfriends. In effect we have two big companies who are both Marvel comics to all intents and purposes but merely have different names.

All the other companies of the mid sixties . . . Charlton, ACG, Tower and so on . . . opted not to follow Marvel's lead and subsequently went bust, leaving the comic field populated solely by the pale ghosts of Lee's former glories.

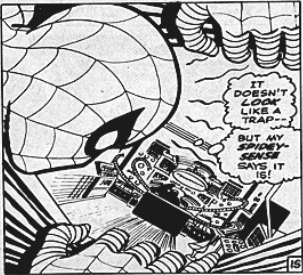
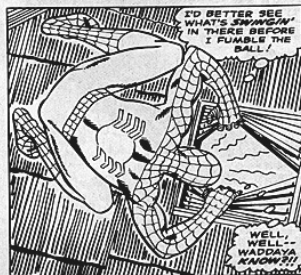
Even the independent publishers that have recently sprung up seem largely unable to do anything more radical than tinker feebly with Lee's basic formulas. *Captain Victory* is little more than *The Eternals* playing at the wrong speed and *Ditko's Missing Man* would not have looked out of place as a sub-plot in *Dr Strange*.

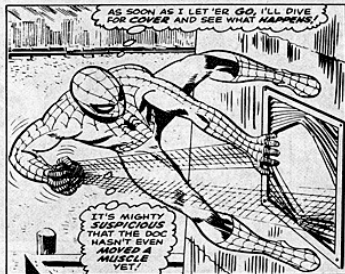
Oddly enough, in imitating the superficial stylistics of Mr Lee's 'Marvel Renaissance', most of these imitators seem unable to recognise the single most important quality that he brought to the comic medium.

Stan Lee, in his heyday, did something wildly and radically different.

And as far as I'm concerned, his vacant throne will remain empty until we come up with someone who has the guts and imagination to do the same.

Any offers? ●







—READER'S SURVEY—

DON'T WAIT, DON'T HES-

We were all sitting around the office the other day, playing shove-ha-penny with our Krugerrands and making paper aeroplanes out of our ICI shares certificates when a sudden thought occurred to us. We realised that while you, the reader, know almost everything about us, we know next to nothing about you. For example, while you know that Bernie Jaye used to be a prominent brain surgeon, that Alan Moore used to be known as Mia Farrow before he changed his name, and Florin Florenzo is a megastar in the wondrous world of pop; we don't know you from Adam.

To remedy this situation, we've devised the following questionnaire. All you have to do is answer the questions that you do not feel to be an insult to your intelligence and ignore all the rest.

If you need any extra space to answer the questions then just affix as many sheets of notepaper as you require, making sure that you make it clear which questions you're responding to by quoting the number of the question concerned. The same goes for those of you who don't want to spoil your copy of *The Daredevils* by ripping out pages... just copy down your answers onto an ordinary sheet of writing paper and post it off to us at the usual editorial address.

Mark the envelope **Reader's Survey** as we intend to put all the letters we receive into a hat and hold a draw, with prizes going to the first three to be drawn. This is, as you are aware, a pathetic attempt to con you into actually bothering to answer all this time-consuming drivel. We're really desperate, see? And on top of that we're all incredibly nice people and it's not as if we ask you for many favours, you miserable ungrateful wretches. So come on, eh? Grab a biro, or a wax crayon if you're being kept somewhere where they don't let you use anything sharp, and start scribbling away.

Thanks a lot. You're a terrific bunch of kids and we knew we could count on you.

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2. OKAY, YOU CHEAP TWO-BIT PUNK! WE'RE THROUGH PLAYING GAMES! NOW WHAT'S YOUR REAL NAME?

3. WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

4. ASSUMING THAT YOU WERE ACTUALLY BORN RATHER THAN COBBLED TOGETHER OUT OF SPARE PARTS AND BRAINS TAKEN FROM CONVICTED AXE-MURDERERS SOMEWHERE IN PENNSYLVANIA, ON WHAT DATE DID THIS TAKE PLACE?

5. WHICH SCHOOL, COLLEGE OR BORSTAL DO YOU ATTEND?

6. IF YOU'RE NOT AT SCHOOL OR COLLEGE, WHERE DO YOU WORK?

7. WHAT ARE YOUR THREE ALL-TIME FAVOURITE FILMS, EXCLUDING FOR THE MOMENT OBVIOUS FAVOURITES LIKE DRILLER KILLER AND S.S. TORTURE CAMP?

8. WHAT ARE YOUR THREE ALL-TIME FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMMES?

9. WHAT ARE YOUR THREE ALL-TIME FAVOURITE BANDS OR SOLO RECORDING ARTISTS?

10. IF YOU ANSWERED THE NOLAN SISTERS OR JULIO IGLESIAS TO THE ABOVE QUESTION, WERE YOU JUST TRYING TO BE FUNNY OR DO YOU GENUINELY NEED HELP?

- ☐ JUST TRYING TO BE FUNNY.
☐ NEED HELP.

11. DO YOU BELONG TO A YOUTH GROUP OR CULT OF ANY KIND? ARE YOU A MOD, PUNK, SKINHEAD, KASTA, HIPPIY, BIKER, OR JUST A PLAIN OLD-FASHIONED RUGGED INDIVIDUALIST? ARE YOU A NEW ROMANTIC, A SECOND-HAND ROMANTIC OR A SLIGHTLY SHOP SOILED ROMANTIC?

ITATE, COMMUNICATE!!

12. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS YOU?

☐ "I THINK MRS. THATCHER AND PRESIDENT REAGAN ARE THE BEST THING SINCE GERRY AND SYLVIA ANDERSON. I THINK SOCIAL SECURITY SCROUNGERS SHOULD HAVE THEIR HANDS CHOPPED OFF AND WE SHOULD NUKE THE ARGENTINIANS UNTIL THEY GLOW." (CONSERVATIVE APPROACH)

☐ "I THINK MRS. THATCHER AND PRESIDENT REAGAN ARE, WELL, BASICALLY, YOU KNOW, ALLRIGHT ON SOME THINGS BUT MAYBE NOT SO HOT ON OTHERS. I'M NOT SURE WHAT I THINK REALLY. PERHAPS SOCIAL SECURITY SCROUNGERS SHOULD HAVE SOMETHING CHOPPED OFF. MAYBE JUST A FINGER OR SOMETHING. I THINK WE SHOULD TRY TO BE FRIENDLY TO THE ARGENTINIANS AND THEN NUKE THEM UNTIL THEY GLOW." (LIBERAL/SDP APPROACH)

☐ "I THINK MAGGIE FATCHER'S WELL OUT OF ORDER. JOHN, I RECKON WE OUGHT TO TELL OLD MOPALONG WHERE HE CAN STICK 'IS CRUISE MISSILES AND HAVE REDUCED BUSFARES FOR GAY OLD-AGE PENSIONERS. MINE'S A LAGER TOP SOUIRE. LEAVE IT OUT, TURN IT UP, KNOW WHAT I MEAN?" (LABOUR APPROACH)

☐ "I THINK I'D JUST AS SOON SIT IN MY BOMB SHELTER AND FORGET THE WHOLE THING." (BITTER AND CYNICAL APPROACH)

☐ "GIZ A JOB. GO ON. GIZZIT. I COULD DO THAT." (YOSSER HUGHES APPROACH)

13. WHAT ARE YOU FAVOURITE FEATURES OR STRIPS?

14. ASSUMING THAT YOUR NOT ONE OF THOSE WISHY-WASHY DRIPS WHO LIKES EVERYTHING, WHAT ARE YOUR LEAST FAVOURITE FEATURES OR STRIPS?

15. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IN MARVEL U.K.?

- ☐ ORIGINAL HOME-PRODUCED STRIPS?
- ☐ CHOICE AMERICAN REPRINTS?
- ☐ TEXT FEATURES LIKE 'INSIDE COMICS'?
- ☐ TEXT STORIES LIKE 'NIGHTRAVEN'?
- ☐ COMPETITIONS?
- ☐ QUIZZES?
- ☐ POSTERS?
- ☐ ANYTHING ELSE WHILE WE'RE AT IT? (GIVE DETAILS)

16. USING THE ABOVE LIST, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE LESS OF IN MARVEL UK'S MAGAZINES?

17. IF YOU WERE GIVEN THE CHANCE TO MAKE ANY CHANGES YOU WANT TO MARVEL UK, WHAT WOULD THOSE CHANGES BE? (NB: ANYONE WHO SUGGESTS TERMINATING THE CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT OF EITHER MS B JAYE OR MR A MOORE HAD BETTER START SLEEPING WITH THEIR BEDROOM WINDOWS LOCKED.)

18. WHAT SORT OF TOPICAL ISSUE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MARVEL UK EXPLORING. EITHER IN STORY FORM OR AS TEXT FEATURES? ANIMAL WELFARE? NUCLEAR POWER? WHY 'BLUE PETER' ISN'T SO GOOD WITHOUT JOHN NOAKES? URBAN VIOLENCE? ANY OTHERS? (GIVE DETAILS)

DON'T FORGET THAT ALL ENTRIES FOR THE DAREDEVILS SURVEY HAVE TO BE IN BY MAY 14TH, DARLING!

I WANT TO GET SWEET-HEART, I PROMISE!

19. GIVE A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE SORT OF CONTENTS WHICH WOULD MAKE UP YOUR OWN PERSONAL PERFECT DREAM COMIC BOOK.

20. WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED SECRET FANTASY? COME ON, YOU CAN TELL US, WE'RE YOUR FRIENDS, WE WON'T LAUGH.

21. IS THERE ANYTHING THAT WE'VE FORGOTTEN? IF SO THEN FEEL FREE TO RANT AWAY ON AN ADDITIONAL SHEET OF PAPER FOR AS LONG AS YOU WANT. KEEP IT CLEAN.

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